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[redacted]

14 June 1955

NSC BRIEFING

ARGENTINE CHURCH-STATE CONFLICT

I. New incidents -- growing out of the seven-month Peronista campaign to reduce the Catholic church's political power -- have raised political tension in Argentina to its highest peak in over two years. There were large-scale Catholic demonstrations on 11 June and minor clashes on 12 and 13 June.

A. Catholic groups became increasingly active in resisting Peron's campaign following December '54 passage of new laws which legalized both divorce and prostitution (latter known as "Law of Social Prophylaxis"), also granted inheritance and other rights to illegitimate children.

B. Catholic resistance has included pamphlet campaigns, demonstrations, even inflamatory sermons urging Catholics to "defend their faith", at the cost of their lives if necessary.

C. Anti-Peronists, regardless of complexion, have joined the fray, and pro-church pamphlets have been circulated both by Communists and by the major opposition Radical Party (which traditionally advocates separation of church and state).

II. Strongest Catholic agitation was triggered by legislation passed last month, which -- among other provisions -- calls

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up specially elected assembly within 180 days to consider constitutional revision formally separating church and state.

A. Article 2 of present Argentine constitution declares that the federal government shall "support" the Roman Catholic Church, ALTHOUGH EXACT NATURE OF SUPPORT NOT DEFINED

III B. Other May laws abolished compulsorary Catholic education, financial subsidies, and tax exemption for the church.

A C. Although revenue is involved, political (rather than financial) motives appear dominant in latter actions.

B D. Although representatives of all Argentine political groups are reported to favor the new legislation, many have objected to the turbulent atmosphere in which it has been promoted.

IV III. Principal impetus for Peron's campaign against his former ally apparently stems from his conviction that opposition elements in Argentina were working with some of the Catholic clergy to organize a "Christian Democratic" political movement aimed at the overthrow of his regime.

A. Peron also resents Church competition and agitation against his youth program for training of future Peronistas.

B. Peron steadfastly maintains he is not attacking the Church itself, but only its political action.

C. Charges Church is supporting attempts to create a new "democratic-clerical-oligarchical union" which would continue opposition efforts of past 12 years to oust his regime.

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

IV. Although plans ~~for~~ (TO ORGANIZE) an Argentine "Christian Democratic" movement have been (RELIABLY) reported, there are indications that several of Peron's ~~leftist~~ (EXTREMIST) advisers (PARTICULARLY INTERIOR MINISTER), may have exaggerated the movement's importance in order to make Peron veer from his more moderate right ward trend of past two years.

A. "Strange bedfellow" support for the Church by various opposition groups would also tend to inflame Peron's suspicions.

VI. Church-state conflict is not expected to threaten stability of Peron regime for the present, but the issue remains susceptible to serious incidents of violence until after the constituent assembly meets (possibly in early November).

A. Issue has given opposition elements--especially Radicals and Communists--their best vehicle to date for fomenting anti-Peron sentiment.

B. Conflict also serves to create friction among Peronistas themselves.

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

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A. Catholic groups increasingly active against Peron after new (Dec '54) laws okaying divorce, prostitution ("Law of Social Prophylaxis"), granting inheritance, other rights to illegitimate.

B. Resistance has included pamphlets, demonstrations, inflamatory sermons urging Catholics to "defend faith,"

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

C. Anti-Peronists, regardless of complexion, have joined fray: pro-Church pamphlets circulated by Communists and by the major opposition Radical Party (which traditionally advocates separation of church and state).

II. Strongest Catholic agitation triggered by latest legislation (May '55) which--among other provisions--calls for special convention (to meet in next six months) to consider constitutional revision formally separating church and state.

A. Article 2 of present constitution provides federal "support" for Church.

III B. Other May laws abolish compulsorary Catholic education, financial subsidies, tax exemption for the church.

A C. Although revenue is involved, political (rather than financial) motives appear dominant in latter actions.

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

B. Representatives of all Argentine political groups reportedly favor new legislation, but many have objected to turbulent atmosphere in which it promoted.

IV ~~III~~. Principal impetus for Peron's campaign against his former ally is his apparent conviction that opposition elements in Argentina are working with some of Catholic clergy to organize "Christian Democratic" movement, overthrow him.

A. Peron also resents Church competition, agitation against his own youth program.

B. Peron steadfastly maintains he not attacking Church itself, but only its political action.

C. Charges Church supporting attempts create new "democratic-clerical-oligarchical union" which would continue opposition's 12-year efforts oust his regime.

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

SECRET
Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

V. Plans to organize some sort of Argentine "Christian Democratic" movement have been reported by reliable sources.

A. However, are indications that several of Peron's extremist advisers (particularly Minister of Interior Borlenghi, who reports on internal police and political matters) may have exaggerated movement's importance in order switch Peron from moderate rightward trend of past two years.

B. "Strange bedfellow" support for Church by opposition groups would also tend inflame Peron's suspicions.

VI. Church-state conflict not expected to threaten stability Peron regime for present, but issue remains susceptible to serious incidents of violence until after constituent convention meets (possibly early Nov).

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2
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Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

A. Issue has given opposition elements--especially Radicals and Communists--their best vehicle to date for fomenting anti-Peron sentiment.

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Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

NSC BRIEFING 15 JUNE 1955

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BACKGROUND - CHURCH & STATE IN L.A.

I. In the following Latin American countries, separation of church and state has been effected:

Brazil	1890
Chile	1925
Cuba	1901
El Salvador	1871
Guatemala	1871
Haiti (1)	1830
Honduras	1880
Mexico	1853
Nicaragua	1894-1908
Panama	1903
Uruguay	1919

(1) Despite the separation, some governments continue to give financial aid to the church. Furthermore, in Haiti, church-state relations are at present very close.

II. Separation of church and state has not been effected in the following:

Argentina
Bolivia
Colombia (2)
Costa Rica
Dominican Republic
Ecuador
Paraguay
Peru
Venezuela (3)

(2) Although church and state were separated in Colombia on June 15, 1853, the present official position of the church is so closely intertwined with the government that separation cannot be considered in effect in any way.

(3) While church and state in VENEZUELA have been separated defacto at various times, the state continues to exercise control over church administration and to supply financial support.

III. A priest's estimate of religious affiliation in Argentina, as reported by the American embassy there on 25 March 55, is as follows:

20% - Active, practising Catholics
50% - Have had some contact with the Church, but have little sense of responsibility toward it.
20% - Have had no ties
10% - Anti-Catholic

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

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Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

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Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

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Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2
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NSC BRIEFING

AM
15 June 1955

SOVIET AVIATION "SHOW-OFF" PLANS

I. In past three weeks, USSR has apparently adopted surprising new policy of actively seeking international publicity for its achievements in aircraft design.

A. Soviet spectators at Toronto International Trade Fair publicly characterized US air display as "obsolete" (which in fact much of it was) and suggested that world watch for "something new" at Moscow Aviation Day fly-by this weekend.

B. Soviet Legation in Switzerland has indicated USSR's interest in exhibiting military planes at Geneva International Air Show (24 June-17 July).

C. USSR may also participate in Canada's International Air Show next year.

D. Finally, USSR has - for second consecutive year - pushed schedule of Moscow's Aviation Day show-off (normally July) up to late June (19th).

II. Comments at Toronto Trade Fair are attributed by press to team of Soviet engineers, who showed particular interest in Martin Matador (pilotless bomber) and in engine exhibits.

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2
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A. Engineers stated that Aviation Day display will include "models more advanced than those seen before" and will "make US airpower look obsolete".

B. Suggested Canadian hosts visit Moscow to "compare what you see here with what we will show."

III. In Switzerland, following up earlier statements by Soviet officials that USSR might send MIG jet fighters to Geneva show (where UK, France and others will display late military types), Legation spokesmen said USSR "seriously considering" participation.

A. Asked details of plans of other nations, particularly US.

B. Questioned suitability of Geneva airport for operating Soviet bomber types and stated that, if unable to land, bombers might in any case over-fly Show.

IV. Possibility of USSR exhibition at Canadian Show (June, '56) first broached in late May, when Soviet Ambassador made bid for such participation.

A. Press states that engineers at Toronto Fair confirmed this Soviet intent.

V. Meanwhile, rehearsals for unusually early Aviation Day fly-by in Moscow have displayed lesser

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2
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numbers of same jet bombers (four-jet BISONS and twin-jet BADGERS) which overflew city in rehearsals for abortive May Day parade.

A. ~~Not seen, so far, is~~ ALSO SEEN REHEARSING WERE FEW OF turbo-prop bombers (BEAR), of which at least nine were seen during May Day rehearsals.

B. Also ~~apparently scheduled~~ SEEN REHEARSING for "official" Aviation Day display are the new day fighters (FARMER) and all-weather interceptors (FLASHLIGHT) likewise seen during May Day rehearsals.

C. Only "new" craft seen rehearsing to date is a large helicopter.

1. Seems unlikely that blow-hard engineers at Toronto would have had something this "tame" in mind.

2. Has been Soviet practice in past to include prototypes in this show, so may be surprise in store.

VI. Following considerations could underlie apparent Kremlin switch to active hunt for publicity on air developments.

A. Present Soviet progress places USSR on at least equal footing with US in development CERTAIN CATEGORIES modern fighters, bombers.

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Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

B. "Show-off" in Moscow, properly touted abroad, serves to underscore this progress.

C. "Show-off" abroad (if either Geneva or Canada participation actually materializes) permits muscle-flexing before audience particularly sensitive to threat of nuclear war.

D. At same time, such "show-off" can be propagandized by USSR as exact opposite - - a sort of "curtain-lifting" gesture towards international amity, cooperation.

SECRET
Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

D. Finally, USSR has--for second consecutive year--pushed schedule for annual Aviation Day display (normally July) up to ~~late~~ Mid- June (19th).

II. Technical press has reported comments made at Toronto Trade Fair by team of Soviet engineers, who showed particular interest in Martin Matador (pilotless bomber) and US jet engine exhibits.

A. Engineers stated that coming Aviation Day display will include "models more advanced than those seen before" and will "make US airpower look obsolete."

B. Suggested Canadian hosts visit Moscow to "compare what you see here with what we will show."

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Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

SECRET
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Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2
SECRET

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

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Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

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Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2
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NSC BRIEFING

AM
15 June 1955

RECENT ASSESSMENTS OF TOP SOVIET LEADERS

I. Conduct of Soviet pilgrims in Belgrade (particularly Khrushchev) made uniformly bad impression both on Yugoslavs and on Western representatives on the scene. Yugoslavs openly contemptuous of Soviet leader following visit.

25X1C

A. [redacted] reports Yugoslav assessment of Soviet delegation as composed of "uncouth second-raters." Yugos felt that Tito stood head and shoulders above them, and were taken aback by continued inflexibility and Stalinist cast of Soviet thinking

B. Top-ranking Yugoslavs concentrated venom on Khrushchev, who was described as "horrible little man," "completely tactless and showoff," an "ignoramus." His performance even caused some Yugoslavs to wonder "how long Khrushchev will last."

25X1C8b

II. [redacted] press observers reportedly believe neither Khrushchev nor Bulganin displayed qualities of leadership.

A. Lowenthal (Soviet expert of the London Observer) reports that Khrushchev "looked like one of these horny-handed miners who receives gold watch from his pals and boss following thirty years of toil."

B. Described Bulganin as "chinovnik"-type (i.e., "petty bureaucrat" in most derogatory sense).

SECRET
Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

III. In same connection, Ambassador Bohlen, following attendance at large Soviet party for Nehru, comments that the more the top Soviet leaders are seen, the less and less impressive they become.

A. Bohlen states: "In fact, with exception of Malenkov (who, even in eclipse, strikes me of superior quality to others) and Molotov (who, perhaps by experience, gives impression of greater dignity and capability), there is not one of present Presidium membership who appears to have outstanding personal qualities or abilities."

IV. Reaction in Belgrade to Soviet delegation probably result of shock caused by Khrushchev's uninhibited, headlong temperament seen in new role for first time.

A. Contrast is sharp, when compared with reptilian reserve of Stalin, who was always shielded from close scrutiny.

B. Bohlen's appraisal of Soviet leaders, while unflattering is less extreme than Yugoslavs', probably because of greater familiarity.

C. Whatever Khrushchev's diplomatic ineptitude, it has not stood in way of his rise to top and it is equally doubtful that it will cause his decline.

1. His personal position is probably little affected by Belgrade performance.

2. While individual Soviet leaders may lack polish and fail to measure up to Western standards of "greatness," nonetheless unsafe to conclude that Soviet policy is therefore in incompetent hands.

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

SECRET

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

NSC BRIEFING

AM
15 June 1955

EGYPT-ISRAELI PROBLEMS

I. Situation along Gaza border still quiet -- only two minor shooting incidents since 30 May; no unusual military activity reported from either side.

II. Prospects dimmer for USEFUL OUTCOME Egypt-Israeli talks, DESPITE BETTER LIKELIHOOD THAT TALKS WILL ACTUALLY TAKE PLACE.

A. Egyptian note to UN on 10 June accepts proposal for talks, but

1. Limits agenda to four points already suggested by UNTSO Burns;
2. Defines Nasr border proposal as one to establish "neutral" rather than "demilitarized" zone.
3. Supplementary information indicates Lt. Col. Gohar, rather than "general officer" requested by Israel, appointed as Cairo's representative at talks.

B. All these points unlikely to meet Israeli views.

1. Use of word "neutral" especially objectionable as putting cloud over Israeli sovereignty its side of demarcation line.
2. Prime minister Sharett told American ambassador on 11 June that "whole thing had fizzled out."

III. Conclusion--Situation likely to continue inconclusive for immediate future. Border incidents may resume at higher rate, as before 30 May.

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Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

NSC BRIEFING SECRET AM 14 June 1955

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Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

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Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2
SECRET

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Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

SECRET
Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

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Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2
SECRET

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

NSC BRIEFING

15 June 1955

BACKGROUND--SINGAPORE LABOR STRIFE

I. "Sympathy" strikes in Singapore, accompanied by some violence, got underway 13 June (exactly one month after serious Communist-directed riots in May).

A. Strikes thus far involve 15-30,000 manual and transportation workers, although strike leaders had hopes for (and continue to claim) a general work-stoppage (70,000 or more).

B. Immediate trigger was arrest (12 June) of six suspected Communists, five of whom were union leaders.

C. Actually, strike had been in making for some time, as one-day demonstration supporting wage negotiations in progress between 1,300 civil service clerks (employed in harbor administration) and Singapore government.

1. Harbor clerks have been out for 7 weeks, and negotiations are now deadlocked on question of back-dating agreed salary schedule.

2. Harbor union involved is a moderate one, affiliated with moderate Singapore Trades Union Council (TUC).

D. Leaders of "sympathy" strike now say it will continue until release of six arrested.

1. Communist-directed students, who were "activists" in May riots, quiet to date.

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

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Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

II. "Sympathy" strikes engineered by far-left People's Action Party (PAP), which active in labor field.

A. Although PAP disavows Communism, it has associated itself with Communist Party in fight against colonialism, accepts support from strong Communist elements in Singapore Chinese student and labor groups.

1. Communist Party, outlawed in 1948, appears to be successfully manipulating PAP.

III. Trade unionism accounts for only 76,000 of Singapore's estimated working force of 250,000 (80% Chinese).

A. Approximately half of 76,000 government-employed: 25,000 in moderate Singapore Trades Union Council, 7,000 in unions controlled by PAP, after this, field is open.

B. PAP has strategic position among public transport, education, and civil aviation workers.

1. PAP may increase its influence among navy base and harbor employees as result "sympathy" strike.

IV. British authorities in Singapore believed amply capable cope with any Communist-directed labor violence.

A. 5,000 police and special constables in Singapore

V. Communist subversion and unrest in Singapore, principally affecting students and trade unionists, expected to increase.

A. Subversion receives chief emphasis in Malayan Communist directives.

B. Communists proved in May they can create trouble whenever they wish.

C. Morale of anti-Communists in Singapore has suffered severely during past month.

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2
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B. BY THIRD DAY (15 JUNE) DOWN TO SOME 17,000.

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Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

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VI. Communist subversion and unrest in Singapore, principally affecting students and trade unionists, expected to increase.

A. Subversion receives chief emphasis in Malayan Communist directives.

B. Communists proved in May they can create trouble whenever they wish.

C. Morale of anti-Communists in Singapore has suffered severely during past month.

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2
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NSC BRIEFING 15 June 1955

FORMOSA STRAITS

I. No significant combat operations in past week.

A. Chicoms continue defer aggressive action while possibility of Sino-US talks being explored.

II. Airfield construction along coast continues.

25X1X7 A. [redacted] Chicoms may be about to renovate old airfield at Swatow. 25X1X7

B. [redacted] runway of Nantai (Foochow) airfield completed.

C. Chicom planes have not yet appeared at Lungtien (30 miles S of Foochow) or Chenghai (6 miles NE of Swatow) where runways believed serviceable.

III. Chicom propaganda of past week has introduced no new line on Formosa issues.

A. Peiping alleges there is growing campaign in US for negotiations to ease tensions.

B. Peiping on 10 June broadcast 2 June interview in which Chou En-lai told Indonesian newsman Peiping is willing to negotiate only the US "occupation" of Formosa, that there is no need for cease-fire.

C. Chou explicitly endorsed "good offices" of interested third

25X1C8b parties in setting up Sino-US talks.

IV. [redacted]

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2
SECRET NOFORN

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

[redacted]

E. Both Chicoms and Chinats have repeatedly denounced compromise proposals of this type. However, Chicoms might well see in such proposals a good chance for impairing US relations with major allies and Asian neutrals, many of whom would favor some such compromise.

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

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Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

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Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

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Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2
SECRET

NSC BRIEFING 15 June 1955

KWANGTUNG FAMINE

I. Winter and spring drought in South China's Kwangtung Province (pop. 35 million) is reported by ChiCom's themselves, to be worst in over 90 years. ChiCom's organizing "spring and summer famine" relief.

25X1A6a

A. [redacted] 8-10,000 Kwangtung residents trying to enter British Colony.

B. Consulate reports "thousands" attempting cross border into Portuguese Macao.

II. Despite bad conditions, ChiComs are shipping rice out of South China.

A. Yangtze Valley--China's traditional "rice bowl"--suffered badly from summer '54 floods.

B. This year ChiComs have been getting rice for export to Ceylon from South China, rather than Yangtze Valley. (300,000 tons planned for '55, about half already shipped).

C. Peiping even complaining that improperly large amount of state food stock in Kwangtung being issued to local population, instead of being reserved.

III. Situation in Kwangtung will not improve before this year's first rice harvest (late summer): even then, government crop collections are likely to result in continuing "austerity," rationing.

SECRET
Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

Approved For Release 2000/06/15 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

A. However, Communist control of area remains firm and Peiping does not seem fearful of possible peasant dissidence.

B. [redacted]

25X6

Approved For Release 2000/06/15 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

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Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

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NSC BRIEFING ~~SECRET~~ 15 AM June 1955

EGYPT-ISRAELI PROBLEMS

I. Situation along Gaza border still quiet--only two minor shooting incidents since 30 May; no unusual military activity reported from either side.

II. Prospects dimmer for USEFUL Egypt-Israeli talks.

A. Egyptian note to UN on 10 June accepts proposal for talks, but--

1. Limits agenda to four points already suggested by UNTSO Burns;

2. Defines Nasr border proposal as one to establish "neutral" rather than "demilitarized" zone.

3. Indicates that Lt. Col. Gohar--rather than "general officer" requested by Israel--has been appointed as Cairo's representative at talks.

B. All these points unlikely to meet Israeli views.

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

1. Use of word "neutral" especially objectionable as putting cloud over Israeli sovereignty its side of demarcation line.

2. Prime minister Sharett told American ambassador on 11 June that "whole thing had fizzled out."

III. Situation likely to continue inconclusive for immediate future.

A. Border incidents may resume at higher rate, as before 30 May.

B. However, anything more unlikely, since Israel probably considers that disadvantages of taking Gaza strip by force would outweigh gains, while Egypt is leaning over backwards to avoid actual war.

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

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SYRIAN FOREIGN MINISTER TO VISIT US

I. Khalid al Azm to arrive in New York 17 June.

A. Azm, leader of leftist clique running Syria, to attend UN meeting in San Francisco.

A. Azm is leagued with the powerful, leftist Communist-infiltrated, Arab Socialist-Resurrectionist Party, which enjoys considerable support among the Syrian military, including Chief of Staff Shawkat Shuqayr. Numerous independent, and various [redacted] deputies also support Azm. Azm bargained for and got Communist support in last fall's parliamentary elections.

25X6

B. Azm's aim is to retain sufficient strength in parliament to effect his election to the presidency. In August parliament will elect successor to octogenarian, pro-Western President Atasi.

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Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000400050002-2

C. This policy dictates his alignment with the anti-Iraqi policy of the Arab Socialists, the army high command, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and France. He is committed to signing the Egyptian-Saudi Arabian-Syrian defense pact.

D. At the same time, however, he must limit this alignment in order to avoid provoking a rightist coup. He is therefore bargaining hard and delaying the pact in an attempt to make it acceptable at home.

25X6

[redacted]

App

25X6
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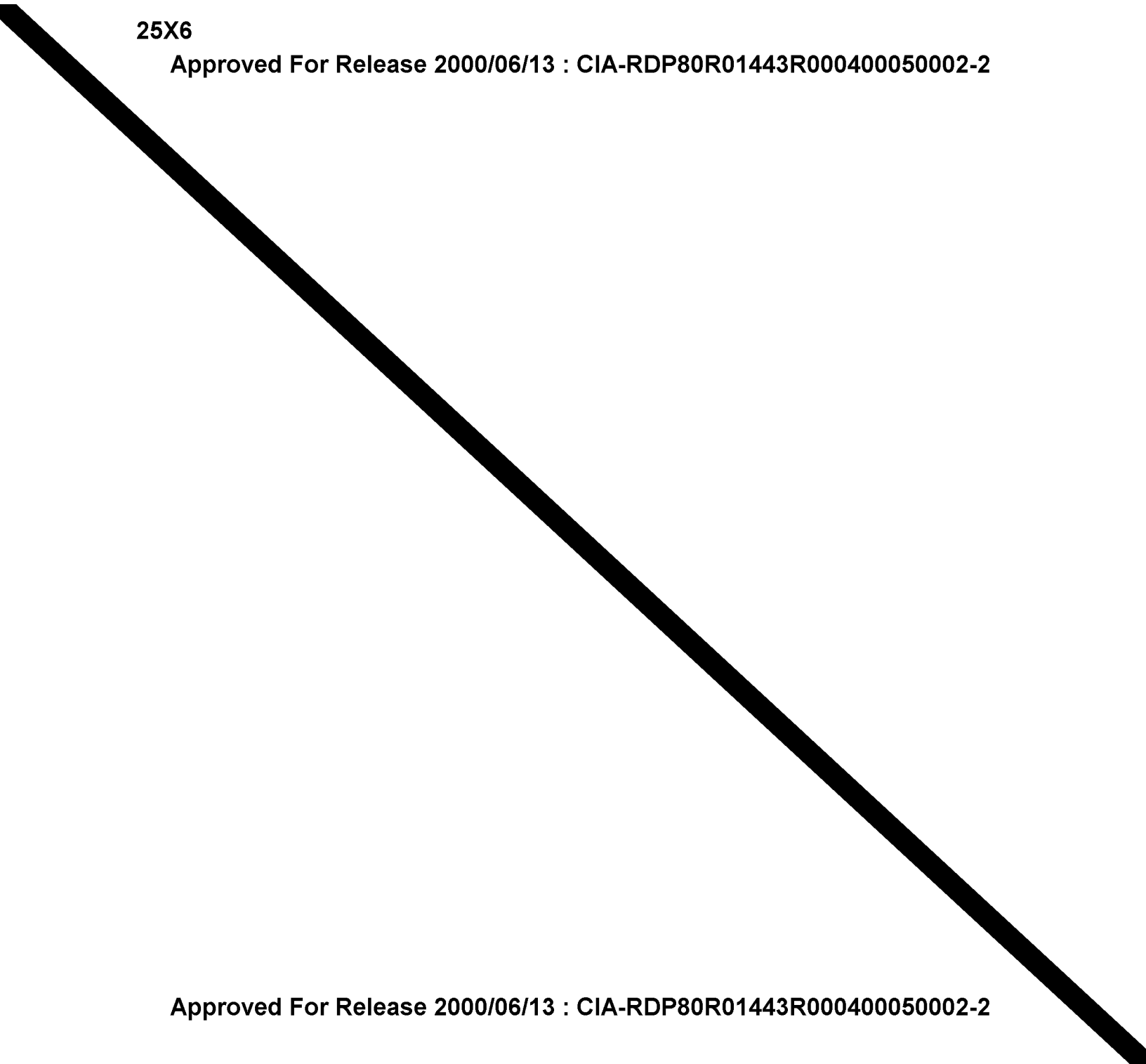

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